Two only) mainly due to changes in internet and other Telecom tarrifs in the period which made the internet kiosk commercially unviable.

Installation of new telephone exchanges

216. SHRI ANIL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that installation of new telephone exchanges has been discontinued throughout the country;

(b) whether uncovered rural and urban areas are proposed to be covered with the help of WLL;

(c) if the replies to parts (a) and (b) above are in affirmative, whether the coverage of uncovered areas is impossible on accounts of hill topography in hilly areas of the country; and

(d) whether in view of this difficulty in hilly States, Government would consider installation of telephone exchanges in each area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) :

Reply in respect of BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The coverage of the hilly areas of the country is possible and the policies being followed for the installation of an exchange is as given below:

(i) The planning of rural aras should first be with WLL solution.

(ii) If WLL solution is not workable due to technical reasons, a new exchange should be planned with minimum registration of 75 within the local area of exchanges.

(iii) New exchange should be commissioned on optical fiber media. However, radio/satellite media should be used wherever optical fiber media is not techno-economically feasible.

Reply in respect of MTNL (Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited)

(a) No, Sir. Exchanges are being installed in MTNL.

(b) There is no uncovered area in MTNL, however, WLL systems have also been inducted into the network of MTNL Delhi and Mumbai Units.

(c) and (d) Do not pertain to MTNL.

Security deposits

217. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of money collected by his Ministry during the past three years ending October 31, 2003, by way of security deposits from the subscirbers at the time of obtaining the facility; and

(b) the amount refunded during the said period on closing the connections by the subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Fall in profits of BSNL

†218. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a fall of around 75 per cent in the profit of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. during the year 2002-03 as compared to the year 2001-02;

(b) the details of the profits made by BSNL from April, 2003 till date during the current period and to what extent this profit is less in comparison to the same period of last year;

(c) the reasons for continuous fall in the profit of BSNL and measures adopted by it to check this trend; and

(d) by when the results would be achieved regarding the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.